

Our national service laws provide funding for numerous worthy organizations such as AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Habitat for Humanity, City Year, Boys and Girls Club, Teach for America, and Youthbuild. This amendment will spur new programs that address the needs of our displaced workers and their families.

So, again I thank my colleague from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON) for offering this amendment, and I am looking forward to working with her on other areas.

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for being compassionate and expanding on the amendment. As she indicated, I have a little health issue I am dealing with here.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. FLAKE

The Acting CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 10 printed in House Report 110-539.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 10 offered by Mr. FLAKE:
Page 16, line 11, strike “; and” and insert a period.

Page 16, strike line 12 and all that follows through page 18, line 21.

Page 148, line 24, strike “\$65,000,000 for fiscal year 2008,” and all that follows through “; and” on page 149, line 4, and insert “\$45,000,000 for fiscal year 2008; and”.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 1015, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Chairman, Ronald Reagan once said, “No matter how big or powerful government gets and the many services it provides, it can never take the place of volunteers.” I believe that wholeheartedly. But listening to the debate today, you might easily conclude that volunteerism wasn’t discovered until Congress discovered it, and that the only meaningful service that anyone can provide is in a program sponsored by government. We all know that that is simply not the case.

In truth, the programs that are being talked about today, the government-sponsored programs, make up probably less than one-hundredth of 1 percent of all the volunteer activity that takes place across this country. But when we have community service and volunteer positions, when we end up financing them or providing incentives from government, it becomes just another government service.

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The new Summer of Service grant program created by this legislation

gives incentives to community service work in the form of financial benefits at taxpayer expense. The amendment that I am offering today would simply strike all the language in the bill relating to the so-called Summer of Service program and reduce the authorization by \$20 million. This is the amount designated to the program.

The new Summer of Service program would award \$20 million annually for education awards for volunteer positions in which school-aged participants can earn up to \$1,000 for completion of a 100-hour community-based service-learning project.

Now, we are all familiar with volunteer service that goes on: churches, Rotary Clubs, Boy Scout organizations. In fact, this weekend, 2 days from now, my own son will be doing his Eagle project. He will provide up to 30 hours of service himself, and more than 100 hours will be provided by people that he has recruited to help him in his project. This kind of activity goes on every day, every minute of every day, every second of every day. And yet, we feel that we have to have new and more government programs somehow to prompt volunteer service. That, I think, sells people across this country short. People can volunteer on their own and do without benefits provided by government.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I rise to claim time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose this amendment. When the National Community Service Act was enacted in 1990, we saw powerful new opportunities to inspire civic engagement and transformation in our communities. Last year, AmeriCorps’ number reached 500,000, and today Learn and Serve Americans continue to support service learning for K-12 and college students making a vital connection between their academic studies and a real world application through their service.

Now, with the Summer of Service program, we can provide a new opening to reach many young people we know will benefit with the opportunities to spend a summer in service to their communities. It is a right of passage during grades 5-12.

Mr. Chairman, this program grants educational awards of up to \$500 to students who complete 100 hours of service over the summer months. By employing service-learning models to teach civic participation skills, the program will help young people serve their communities and expand educational opportunities for themselves and discourage what is commonly known as the summer academic slide.

Today, 10 million students nationwide between the ages of 12 and 18 have participated in school-based service.

Research shows that, among those students, teens from disadvantaged communities who serve hold more positive civic attitudes. Kids who engage in volunteering are more likely to be successful in school and avoid risky behaviors such as drugs, alcohol, and crime. Unfortunately, those disadvantaged teens who have so much to gain from the experience are less likely to volunteer than their peers from more advanced backgrounds.

When service is tied to what students are learning in school, young people make gains on achievement tests, complete their homework more often, and increase their grade point average. Students who engage in service learning improve communication skills, grow more aware of career possibilities, and develop more positive workplace attitudes, laying the foundation for America’s future leaders. Yet, Learn and Serve’s funding stayed the same at no more than \$43 million since 1996, and decreasing over the past several years. In Learn and Serve’s last grant award cycle, they had 506 applications but only the resources for 102 awards.

For generations, during times of great crisis and need throughout our Nation, students have stepped up and served their country and their communities. Today, again, our young people want to serve and are desperate to do their part, yet their call has gone unheard.

Since 2001, there have been nearly 50 proposals involving national service before Congress, and not one has been enacted. Here we have a program that demonstrates our commitment to that great promise. A modest investment in Summer of Service is an important and long overdue step in providing service-learning opportunities for young people to start.

We must do everything we can to help every child reach his or her full potential. We cannot teach our children until we honestly help them become engaged in their communities and give them the power to actively participate in their education. I urge a “no” vote on this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield time to my colleague from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES).

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Chairman, I rise as well to oppose this amendment, which really overlooks the incredible positive impact that a summer of service can have on our youth.

The Summer of Service is a program which fills a policy gap which helps communities create positive alternatives for young teens. The middle school years in particular are extremely pivotal years for young people. Most youth are making the difficult transition from middle school to high school, and many of them have no organized activities during those periods when they are out of school. Many are left unsupervised and at risk of being engaged in potentially harmful activity. We want to engage them. We want to make sure that they have something to do.